

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A computer-implemented method for obtaining clinical data, comprising:  
5 obtaining a plurality of medical questions and at least one question linking  
condition from a database;  
presenting at least one of said medical questions to a user;  
receiving response data from said user; and  
in dependence on said response data and said question linking condition,  
10 determining which additional of said medical questions to present to said user.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein each of said medical questions is associated  
with a corresponding question linking condition, and wherein said  
determining step comprises evaluating each of said corresponding question  
15 linking conditions in dependence on said response data.
3. The method of claim 2, further comprising presenting to said user  
medical questions whose corresponding question linking conditions  
evaluate to true.  
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4. The method of claim 1, wherein said medical questions comprise higher-level  
questions and lower-level questions.
5. The method of claim 4, wherein said presented questions are higher-  
25 level questions, and said method further comprises presenting at least  
one of said lower-level questions to said user if said response data  
represent at least one positive response.
6. The method of claim 4, wherein conjunctions of higher-level question  
30 responses and lower-level question responses represent medical  
pathways associated with predetermined medical conditions.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said method is performed in a distributed computer system, said database is stored in a server computer, said response data are received at a client computer, and said method further comprises transmitting said medical questions from said server computer to said client computer.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein said determining step is performed by said client computer.
9. The method of claim 7, wherein said determining step is performed by said server computer, and wherein said method further comprises transmitting said response data from said client computer to said server computer.
10. The method of claim 1, further comprising storing said response data in a clinical database.
11. The method of claim 10, further comprising storing clinical data from additional users in said clinical database.
12. The method of claim 10, further comprising, at a later time, repeating said obtaining, presenting, receiving, and determining steps to obtain later-time response data, and storing said later-time response data in said clinical database.
13. The method of claim 10, further comprising storing laboratory data in said clinical database.

14. The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining clinical alert conditions from said database, and comparing said response data with said clinical alert conditions.

5 15. The method of claim 14, further comprising presenting a clinical alert to said user in dependence on said comparison.

10 16. The method of claim 14, further comprising presenting a clinical alert to a designated person in dependence on said comparison.

17. The method of claim 14, further comprising contacting a designated person in dependence on said comparison.

15 18. The method of claim 14, further comprising presenting disease-specific questions to said user in dependence on said comparison.

20 19. The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning a weight to said response data, wherein said determining step is performed in further dependence on said weight.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein said presenting step comprises presenting information selected from the group consisting of graphical, textual, and audio information to said user.

25 21. The method of claim 1, wherein said response data are received via a medical instrument.

30 22. The method of claim 1, further comprising evaluating the consistency of said response data.

23. The method of claim 1, further comprising presenting a summary of said response data.

24. A computer-implemented method for obtaining clinical data, comprising:  
5 obtaining a plurality of forms and at least one form linking condition from a database, each form comprising at least one medical question;  
presenting one of said forms to a user;  
receiving response data from said user; and  
in dependence on said response data and said form linking condition, determining a  
10 second form to present to said user.

25. A computer-implemented method for obtaining clinical data, comprising:  
obtaining a first form comprising at least one medical question from a database;  
presenting said first form to a user;  
15 receiving response data from said user;  
obtaining a second form comprising a plurality of potential medical questions and at least one question assembly condition from said database; and  
in dependence on said response data and said question assembly condition,  
20 selecting included questions from among said plurality of potential medical questions for inclusion in said second form.

26. The method of claim 25, further comprising obtaining at least one form linking condition from said database, and selecting said second form in dependence on said response data and said form linking condition.

27. The method of claim 25, further comprising:  
presenting at least one of said included questions to said user; and  
receiving second response data from said user.

28. The method of claim 27, further comprising:  
obtaining at least one question linking condition from said database; and

in dependence on said second response data and said question linking condition, determining additional of said included questions to present to said user.

- 5 29. A program storage device accessible by a processor, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by said processor to perform method steps for obtaining clinical data, said method steps comprising:
- obtaining a plurality of medical questions and at least one question linking condition from a database;
- 10 presenting at least one of said medical questions to a user;
- receiving response data from said user; and
- in dependence on said response data and said question linking condition, determining which additional of said medical questions to present to said user.

- 15 30. A clinical questionnaire system comprising:
- a database for storing a plurality of questionnaire objects comprising clinical questions and question presentation conditions;
- a web server in communication with said database; and
- a web browser in communication with said web server, said web browser for
- 20 presenting selected ones of said clinical questions to a user and receiving response data, wherein said selected clinical questions are selected in dependence on said question presentation conditions and on said response data.

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